



**Mansfield Middle School Association**  
**September 7, 2011**  
**Minutes**

*The meeting was called to order at 7:05.*

***Those in attendance:***

Allison Altieri, Fred Baruzzi, Diane Briody, Shannon Bacon, Jeff Cryan, Deb Grove, Sandy Hill, Sheryl Lambert, Chandra McAllister, Megan Meikle, Candace Morell, Margaret Morrison, Katherine Paulhus, Jeannette Picard, Jamie Pociask, Ruth Washington

President Diane Briody brought the meeting to order. As this was the first meeting of the year, all members were welcomed and each member introduced him or herself.

***Guest Speaker***

Fred Baruzzi, superintendent of schools, welcomed all parents and “gave a face to a name”. He was available for questions regarding the new school year. He noted that Mansfield schools have a broad program and the support of the Board of Education and town. He hoped that all parents and students have a great year.

- Q: Thank you for handling school delay so quickly after the recent storm
- Q: Can you explain the recent library proposal (a joint library directorship between the town library and the Mansfield School libraries)?

A: With the imminent retirement of Louise Bailey, director of the Mansfield Library, the superintendent’s office was asked to investigate the possibility of consolidating the position with the school library position. However, the Library Advisory Council does not agree with the proposal. According to Mr. Baruzzi, \$118,000 in funds would have been reallocated for additional library staff and additional library positions at the school. Presently, there are library assistants serving in each of the three elementary schools. Information regarding the proposal was to be shared at the next Board of Education meeting and would also be presented at the next town council meeting (with the recommendation against the proposal from the Advisory Council).

- Q: Can you give more information regarding the recent Hartford Courant article about Mansfield’s inclusion in a list of towns which did not meet the minimum student expenditure for 2011-2012 (-.05%)?

A: Mansfield experienced an increase in enrollment at the same time that the budget was reduced. A vote will be taken to provide the additional funds necessary to rectify the situation. Mr. Baruzzi noted that the minimum expenditure requirement is in place to help towns which do not historically have the support of taxpayers for education funding.

Mr. Baruzzi will also be available during each school’s Open House to meet with parents and answer questions. He will be present at the MMS Open House on Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-9:30 pm. Members thanked Mr. Baruzzi for coming to meet with them during such a busy week.

***Reports***

**President** – Diane Briody discussed the need for volunteers for committees and as grade level representatives. Sherry Andrews, Grade 6 team, had asked for help with the annual Grade 6 Potluck from the Grade 6 representative, but no one has yet taken that role. Jeannette Picard volunteered to send out a Q-notify message letting parents know that sign-up sheets will be available at the Open House. Allison Altieri will get a list/map for table set up. Jeannette, Allison, and Sheryl Lambert volunteered to man tables starting at 6:00.

**Vice-President:** Allison Altieri noted that she and Jeannette Picard are continuing their work on best practices. They are updating forms and preparing materials to put up as a link on the MMSA website. This will make information on committee work, sign up lists, forms, etc. easily available to all members.

**Treasurer:** Megan Meikle reviewed general treasury balances:

- 2010-2011 - Total Income = \$6834/Total Expenses = \$5214
- Balance as of 9/7/11 = \$4896.85
- Projected account balances for specific items for 2011-12 have not been fully determined. The grant committee for special school projects will be meeting soon and donations from “painless fundraisers” are difficult to project. Deb Grove will contact Mr. Geist for information regarding

the “mixed bag” fundraiser and Megan will contact Kim Bishop regarding the SCRIP gift card program.

*Secretary:* Minutes from our last meeting were presented by Jeannette Picard. A motion to accept the minutes was made, seconded and approved with one abstention.

*Administrative:* Jeff Cryan reported on a number of issues:

- MMS had a peaceful summer – There was no construction, no hiring (all was done before summer began), and numerous weddings and births were celebrated by faculty and staff. MMS experienced a calm start to the school year, despite the storm delay.
- School personnel and the bus company are still working to smooth out bus schedules. Parents can call in the morning if a bus misses a child at pickup. Buses can be late arriving for afternoon pickup when they’re backed up at the high school. However, by 9/16, the bus schedule should be set.
- Three new teachers began the year at MMS:
  - Carol Moran – from Ashford, teaching 5<sup>th</sup> grade
  - Sophia Danforth – Grade 7
  - Yalibi D’Addario – French (native speaker)
- Thirty-five new students have enrolled at MMS – 15 in fifth grade alone (originally a smaller class):
  - 142 students each in Gr 5 & 6
  - 147 students each in Gr 7 & 8New students came from all over the region, state, and world.
- A thank you note was shared from Joseph Willenborg, MMS class of ’07, EOS class of ’11, recipient of the EOS scholarship funded by the MMSA.
- Painless fundraisers – Stop and Shop now has a school funding program (similar to the one available at Big Y). Customers/parents can designate MMS on the shopping card. Diane Briody will ask the fundraising chairs to put together a list of the various companies which will provide funds to schools as directed by their customers.
- Faculty changes:
  - Names – Kelly McCormick>Kelly Brouse, Melissa Silvernail>Melissa Batulevitz
  - Grades – Kate English>Grade 7, Barbara Hunter>Grade 6, Deb St. Jean>Grade 8
- The German Exchange visit will occur starting on the 25<sup>th</sup>. Fifteen students will be visit MMS and staying with MMS students and their families.
- This year, MMS will be presenting the play “Honk”, a variation of the ugly duckling story. Auditions were to be held on September 8 & 9. The first performance of the play, directed by Mrs. Zawodniak, will be on November 18<sup>th</sup>.
- One School/One Read – MMS will be participating in the program again this March. The book has not been picked yet, but students will work in a small mixed-grade group to read the selection together. The activity often culminates with a unique lunch coordinated with the theme of the book
- Stay tuned for information regarding upcoming trips.

*Faculty Representative:* Kelly McCormick/Brouse was unable to attend the meeting, but most information was included in the administrative report.

### ***Other Business***

Last year, plans had been discussed for a memorial to Joyce Crepeau, the parent of an eighth grader and a sixth grader here at MMS. Jeff Cryan will get back to the MMSA regarding a possible donation to the fund in Joyce’s honor for children receiving Special Education services.

*The meeting was adjourned at 8:15.*

*Important dates:*

- MMS Open House – Thursday, 9/15, 6:30 pm opening ceremony
- Next MMSA meeting – Wednesday, 10/5, 7:00 pm

*Respectfully submitted,*

Jeannette Picard

Secretary (pending approval at our next meeting)